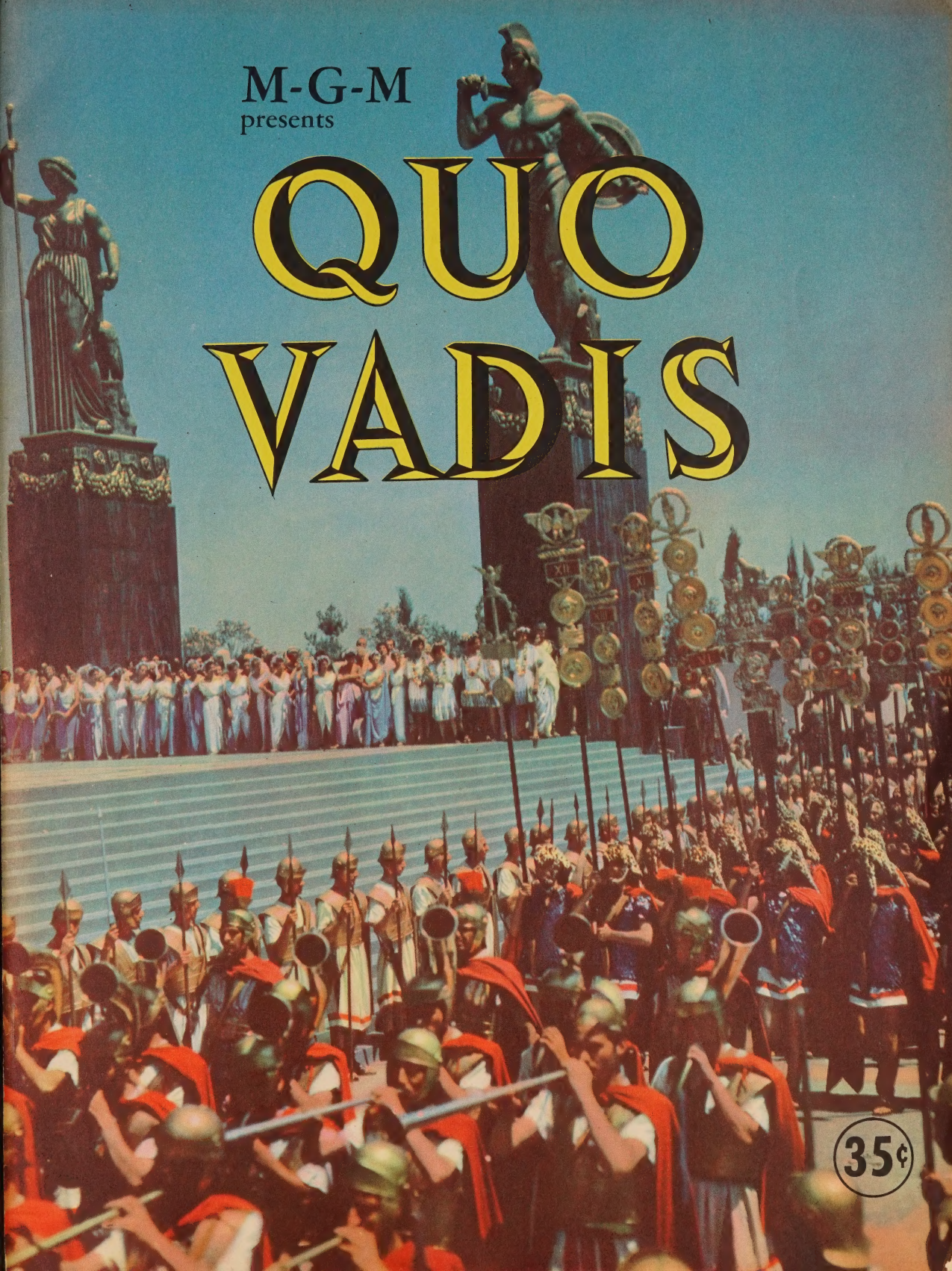

M-G-M
presents
QUO
VADIS
35¢

M·G·M

*presents*

# QUO VADIS

*starring*

## ROBERT TAYLOR · DEBORAH KERR

## LEO GENN

*and*

## PETER USTINOV

COLOR BY

TECHNICOLOR

Screen Play by

JOHN LEE MAHIN

and

S. N. BEHRMAN · SONYA LEVIEN

Based on the Novel by Henryk Sienkiewicz

Music by

MIKLOS ROZSA

| | |
|---|---|
| *Directors of Photography* | ROBERT SURTEES, A.S.C.<br>WILLIAM V. SKALL, A.S.C. |
| *Technicolor Color Consultant* | HENRI JAFFE |
| *Art Directors* | WILLIAM A. HORNING<br>CEDRIC GIBBONS<br>EDWARD CARFAGNO |
| *Film Editor* | RALPH E. WINTERS, A.C.E. |
| *Lyrics Compositions and Historical Adviser* | HUGH GRAY |
| *Choreography* | MARTA OBOLENSKY<br>AURIEL MILLOS |
| *Recording Supervisor* | DOUGLAS SHEARER |
| *Set Decoration* | HUGH HUNT |
| *Special Effects* | THOMAS HOWARD, f.r.p.s.<br>A. ARNOLD GILLESPIE<br>DONALD JAHRAUS |
| *Costumes Recreated by* | HERSCHEL McCOY |
| *Hair Styles Recreated by* | JOAN JOHNSTONE<br>and SYDNEY GUILAROFF |
| *Make-Up Supervision* | CHARLES E. PARKER |

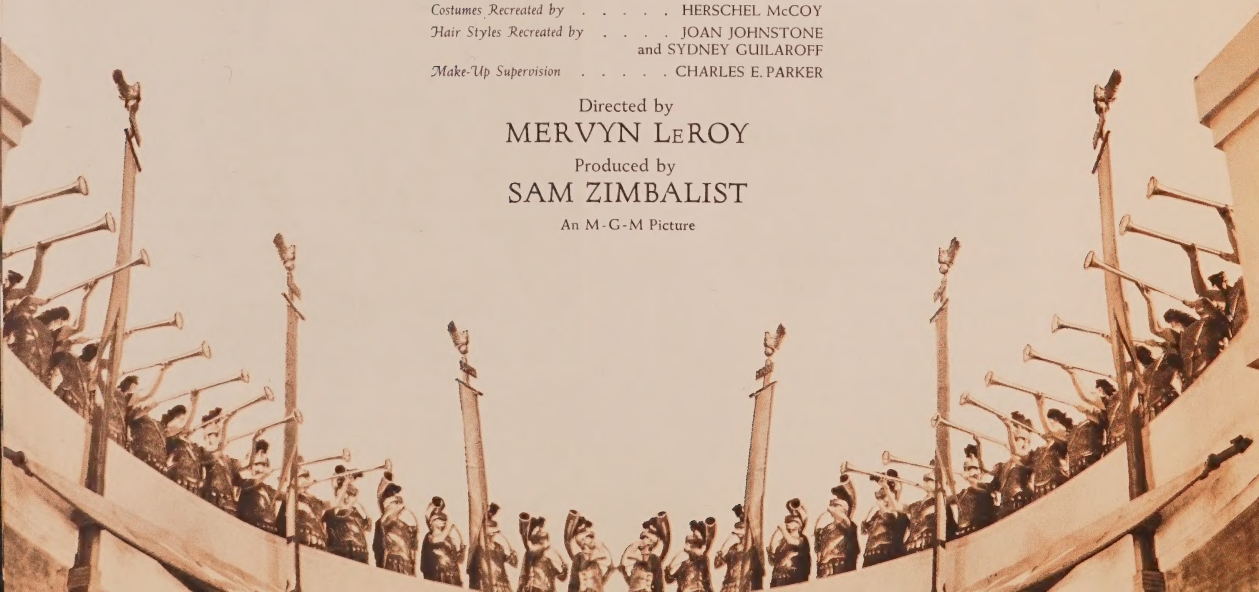
Directed by

MERVYN LEROY

Produced by

SAM ZIMBALIST

An M-G-M Picture



SAM ZIMBALIST

MERVYN LeROY

# PRODUCER AND DIRECTOR

It was M-G-M's good fortune to have at the production helm on "Quo Vadis" two of the most experienced and able craftsmen in the entire film industry. Producer Sam Zimbalist and Director Mervyn LeRoy, both of whom have been associated with M-G-M over a long period of years, literally grew up in the motion picture business.

It is doubtful if there are two other men in Hollywood who, by virtue of background and talent, could have been so admirably suited for the task of guiding a film-making project of this magnitude to a successful fruition. Associated previously on "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo", one of the studio's most successful films, the knowledge and production know-how they possess could only be gained through experience.

Zimbalist, a native of New York City, began his career when he became a film editor for the old Metro Company in the East. He came to Hollywood to serve as editor on the films which the late Nazimova made for Metro.

After a brief return to New York to serve as stage manager for the great actress for a Broadway season, he came back to California and was with M-G-M as a top film editor when the company was formed in 1924. He has remained with the studio ever since, serving first as editor on many of its most ambitious productions, later as an assistant to Producer Hunt Stromberg and finally, in 1937, becoming a producer himself. In addition to "Thirty Seconds Over Tokyo", among the many outstanding films he has produced for M-G-M are "The Crowd Roars", "Boom Town", "Tortilla Flat" and "King Solomon's Mines", one of the most sensational box-office hits of the past decade.

LeRoy, long regarded as one of Hollywood's foremost directors, has been in the theatrical business since, at the age of eleven, he first went on the stage in his native San Francisco. Billed as the "Boy Tenor of the Generation", he sang at the Panama Pacific Exposition in 1915 and later went into vaudeville with a song and dance act.

Determined to get into the motion picture business, he gave up the stage and went to work in the wardrobe department of the old Famous Players-Lasky Studio. Soon he was an assistant cameraman and shortly thereafter a writer. While still in his early 20's, he was made a director and since then has directed more than 40 films and has produced half a dozen others.

Among the memorable films he directed, many of them among the screen's most outstanding artistic and box-office triumphs, are "I Am a Fugitive From a Chain Gang", "Anthony Adverse", "Waterloo Bridge", "Blossoms in the Dust", "Random Harvest", "Madame Curie" and "Little Women", which he also produced. As a producer he also was responsible for such hits as "The King and the Chorus Girl", "They Won't Forget" and "The Wizard of Oz".

Both Zimbalist and LeRoy agree that "Quo Vadis" probably was the most exacting and difficult assignment of their distinguished careers. They also agree it was one of the most satisfying in that they, like everyone else connected with the production, felt throughout that they were engaged in a film project of great and lasting significance.

*Blood lust—Emperor Nero, Empress Poppaea and the royal court await the entrance of lions and victims into the arena.*

*He who dallies with the seductive Empress Poppaea, guarded by pet cheetahs, flirts with disaster.*

# THE MAKING OF QUO VADIS

The task of presenting "Quo Vadis" on the screen in a manner worthy of the scope and significance of the theme was no light one, and it was approached by M-G-M with circumspection and deliberation.

In the late nineteen-thirties the wheels were set in motion. Efforts were begun to clear the motion picture rights with the heirs of Henryk Sienkiewicz, author of the novel.

It had always been planned to produce the film in Italy, scene of the story. Then came World War II, and not until the return of peace was there any prospect of definite production, but during the war years writers continued their work on the script and the Studio Research Department began compilation of the many volumes of historical data which would be needed by the technicians who some day would be designing and executing the sets, costumes and "props" for the picture.

When that day arrived, the vanguard of M-G-M studio executives, specialists and technicians journeyed to Rome, Italy, to look over the ground and survey the available facilities for making "Quo Vadis."

For the most elaborate motion picture ever made it was necessary that the largest possible film-making space be obtained. Fortunately the huge Cinecitta Studios, eight miles from downtown Rome, were available and a lease for their use was consummated. These studios comprise the largest motion picture plant in Europe, with 148 acres and nine big sound stages. Since they were built in 1936 they had been used variously for film production, a factory for producing war material, a barracks for German soldiers, and later as a camp for 30,000 displaced persons.

An almost complete job of reconversion had to be done. One of the largest sound stages became a warehouse for storing costumes; another was divided into sections including a dry-cleaning plant, a laundry and a shoe-repair shop. Part of another stage became a gallery where a group of sculptors began designing and chiseling the more than 500 pieces of statuary that would be needed.

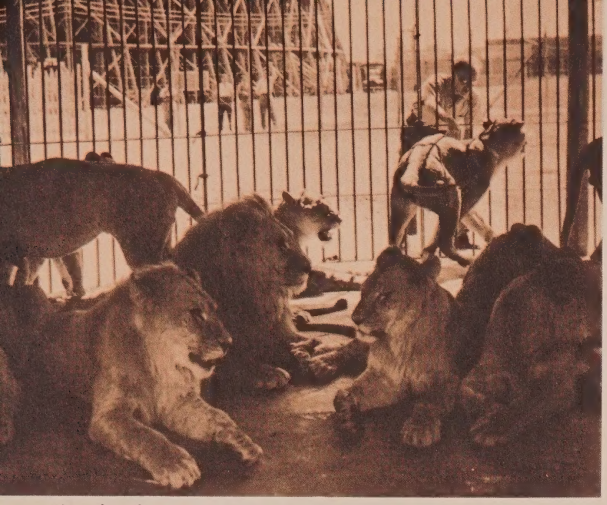
Two years before the actual start of filming, three important Hollywood technicians arrived in Rome to assist in preparing for the production: the art director, the costume designer and the set decorator. Each had spent months at the home studio drawing sketches and compiling data in connection with their respective assignments.

Work began at once on the construction of the huge outdoor sets—a reproduction of the Circus of Nero, large enough to seat 30,000 people; the exterior of Nero's palace; a whole section of ancient Rome, presenting the streets, houses and shops as they appeared, according to careful historical research, two thousand years ago; a great bridge capable of supporting 5,000 people who were to flee across it in their escape from the burning city. To build these and more than 100 other sets, a staff of 500 skilled carpenters went to work, and for the next two years they were kept busy, their number frequently augmented by painters and other artisans.

As the sets began to take form, thousands of other workers started on the costumes. In Italy, as in most foreign countries, costumes are not always made at one central plant, as they often are in Hollywood. Instead, various firms contract for the work and then parcel it out to housewives throughout Italy. This was done on a huge scale in preparing for "Quo Vadis." More than 52,400 yards of

*Conquering Roman warrior—Robert Taylor as Marcus Vinicius drives his chariot as he leads his legions in triumph before Nero's palace.*

*The voice of the vestal virgin is heard proclaiming the execution of Christian martyrs before 20,000 pagan citizens in the Circus of Nero.*



*Sixty-three lions were among the hundreds of animals gathered from all corners of the world.*

*Sculptors designed and chiseled more than 500 pieces of statuary for the production.*

*Shackled captives of victorious Roman legions pull machines of war along the Appian Way.*

material, most of it specially woven, went into the 32,000 costumes. There were more than 15,000 sandals, all hand-sewn; there were 13,000 items of jewelry, 4,000 helmets of brass, aluminum and tin, 4,000 breastplates, 2,000 shields, and 21,700 water bottles.

Working from photographs of actual objects on exhibition in Italian museums, thousands of items were manufactured in the shops, factories and homes of Italian artisans, such as ten chariots, four of them of bronze; 200 goblets of Alexandria glass, fashioned expressly for the film in the famous glass-blowing plants of Venice; more than 20,000 yards of fine fabrics for drapes and carpets.

Famous paintings in the Vatican were used as models for scenes of the Christ carrying the cross through Jerusalem and St. Peter preaching to secret meetings of Christian followers in Rome. Leonardo da Vinci's great painting of The Last Supper inspired one of the most striking scenes in the picture. For the scene in which Nero was to present a model of the new Rome he expected to build, the Italian Government lent M-G-M the treasured Forma Urbis, a model of the city as it is supposed to have appeared 2,000 years ago. Official permission was also given for work on the historic Appian Way which temporarily transformed its appearance to that which it bore in Nero's time. No pains were spared to achieve as perfect accuracy as the most careful research could provide.

One of Hollywood's foremost animal experts went to Italy a year before production began to procure the many animals that figure in the story. Before his job was completed he had traveled some 35,000 miles in Europe and Africa. From seven circuses scattered throughout Europe he rounded up 63 lions, five of which had to be smuggled past Iron Curtain authorities in Vienna who were reluctant to issue the necessary permits. In addition, he obtained seven fighting bulls from Portugal, two cheetahs from Africa, 450 horses including 50 white ones from Denmark, and a wide assortment of oxen, cattle, hogs and other members of the animal kingdom.

Marshalling and handling the thousands of persons engaged in the filming of "Quo Vadis" was as complex a problem of

logistics as has ever faced a general in the field. For make-up and costuming, rooms had to be set up that were capable of handling as many as 10,000 persons within a five-hour period. More than 250 tons of electrical equipment had to be shipped from Hollywood to Italy. As "Quo Vadis" was the first Technicolor feature picture ever made in Italy, and the supply of power in Rome was inadequate, five large generators to furnish power for hundreds of arc lights were sent from the M-G-M studios in England. Later it was necessary to borrow from the Italian Government a generator from the decommissioned battleship, Vittoria Veneto.

Well in advance of the start of actual production the producer, director and casting director arrived in Rome with the chief cinematographer. It was decided already that Robert Taylor was to play the role of Marcus Vinicius and that Deborah Kerr would be starred with him as the beautiful Lygia; also that Buddy Baer, former prizefighter, was to portray Ursus, the giant Christian slave. But there were to be no less than 235 speaking parts in the picture, and more than 40,000 persons applied to the casting department.

For the important role of Petronius the eminent English actor Leo Genn was chosen. Peter Ustinov, well known in England as writer, director and actor, was cast as Nero. Other principal players brought from England were Patricia Laffan (Poppaea), Finlay Currie (St. Peter), Abraham Sofaer (St. Paul), Felix Aylmer, Nora Swinburne, Rosalie Crutchley and numerous others. Lovely Marina Berti, a star of the Italian screen, was cast as the slave girl Eunice. From Hollywood came 12-year-old Peter Miles to play the Christian lad Nazarius and Arthur Walge, young California athlete, to portray Croton the gladiator.

"Quo Vadis" went into production at the Cinecitta Studios on May 22, 1950.

The story has in it the stuff of immortality. In filming it as the most lavish of all productions in the annals of the screen, M-G-M feels that it has been privileged to add something permanent to the cultural treasure-house of civilization.

The dream has come true.

*One of the magnificent sets recreating the glory of the ancient City of Rome.*

*Nero entertains his courtiers with ballads of his own composition.*

*Pagan ceremony before 30,000 people in the forecourt of Emperor Nero's palace as the Roman populace pays homage to vestal virgins and pagan gods.*

*Two immortal love stories—the divine union of Marcus and Lygia, a love that hastened the downfall of Nero's empire; the tragic love of the faithful slave girl, Eunice, for Petronius.*

# THE GREAT NOVEL

Ever since "Quo Vadis" first rolled off the presses as a novel in 1895, it has been making history. Its author, Henryk Sienkiewicz, generally is regarded as Poland's literary genius, but nothing he ever wrote has approached the enormous popularity of this great story.

The American publishing house of Little, Brown and Company had been publishing translations of Sienkiewicz's books for several years and so in 1896 the firm came out with its first printing of "Quo Vadis". Its great and moving love story and religious theme made "Quo Vadis" a sensation.

In existence at the time was an unusual copyright law whereby publishers who issued translations of Polish works must, within six months, come out with a printing of the book in its original Polish or else lose the copyright. Since Little, Brown and Company had never found it necessary to protect the company in this fashion in the instance of other Sienkiewicz stories, this precaution was not taken with "Quo Vadis". Consequently at the end of six months there were several different versions of the book from other publishers on sale. At one time copies were selling from two dollars (largest amount ever charged for a novel up to that period) to seven cents, and there was a special illustrated edition for twelve dollars. The book was the number one best seller in the United States for 25 years after its publication and helped win its author the Nobel Prize in literature.

Before the turn of the century various playwrights produced dramatizations of the story. "Quo Vadis" was presented on the stages of Stockholm, Paris, Vienna, Warsaw and even on Broadway, and by stock companies throughout America. It was also developed into two operas, one enjoying considerable success in Paris.

Always, in novel form, as a play or as an opera, it bore the title—"Quo Vadis".

Naturally, the film makers of the day were quick to sense the screen potentialities of the story. The old Pathe Company produced a twenty minute version in Paris in 1902. Then, in 1912, the Cines Company of Italy produced a nine-reel version which made motion picture history. Longest film ever made up till then, it was imported to the United States and opened in Broadway's Astor Theatre on April 21, 1913. It thus became the first film ever to play in a theatre usually devoted to the legitimate stage and the admission price of one dollar was an unheard of figure at the time. The picture ran 22 weeks at the Astor and had successful road show engagements throughout the rest of the country.

A second Italian version was produced in 1925, this one starring Emil Jennings as Nero. It was during the making of this version that a lion devoured one of the extras, an event which received widespread attention in the world's press.

The current Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer production is, of course, the first time "Quo Vadis" has ever been presented by Hollywood and its first presentation as a talking film or in color.

Before M-G-M could begin production, all legal rights to the production had to be cleared. This meant the studio had to purchase the 1925 production and also had to contact the author's two living children in order to obtain talking picture rights. To obtain the necessary signatures M-G-M engaged a Paris lawyer to go behind the Iron Curtain in Poland. After great difficulty he located Henryk Sienkiewicz, Jr., living in Oblegorek Kielecki, and the daughter, Mrs. Jadeiga Kornilowicz in Krakow. He was able to emerge safely with the necessary documents.

# THE STORY OF QUO VADIS

The story of "Quo Vadis" ("Whither Goest Thou?") begins in the full sunlight of the Roman Empire, then at the height of its power. We are on the Appian Way. All roads, men said, led to Rome, but this was the most famous of them all, and along it moves a seemingly endless procession of Roman soldiers, homeward bound with their shackled captives. The commander of these victorious legions is the young patrician warrior Marcus Vinicius (played by Robert Taylor). Handsome, brave, generous yet capable of cruelty and unbridled self-will, he is a type of the pagan supremacy so soon to be confronted by a Gospel of love and pity—and destined to be overthrown by that Gospel at last.

The panoramic story of "Quo Vadis" is, from one viewpoint, the story of the soul of Marcus Vinicius. We follow him on his return to Rome to receive the honors of the conqueror from his sovereign, Nero (played by Peter Ustinov), whose name has become a symbol of tyranny in its final stage of weak and cowardly wickedness and degeneracy.

There, surrounded by his courtiers who secretly despise while they fear and cater to him, sits the Emperor of the World. One of the courtiers, and the best of the lot, though he is a pagan to his fingertips, is the suave and ironical Petronius (Leo Genn), who is Marcus Vinicius's uncle. It is he who arranges for Marcus to stay at the country place of the retired general Aulus Plautius.

There he sees Lygia (Deborah Kerr), the lovely girl who will henceforth dominate his life. Arrogantly he assumes that he can take possession of her charms in the immemorial way of conquerors, but she resists and escapes him, and he begins to realize that she is no ordinary girl. As a matter of fact Lygia is the daughter of a defeated king, who is being held as a hostage by the Romans in the custody of Aulus Plautius. Extraordinary, too, is Ursus, her servant and body-guard—a giant of a creature, with tremendous strength. These two are Christians—members of the strange cult that follows the teachings of a Man crucified a generation or so ago.

Marcus cannot forget the girl. Returning to the court of Nero, he persuades the Emperor to have Lygia assigned to his custody instead of Plautius's. And at one of Nero's feasts the tyrant informs her that she is now Marcus Vinicius's slave. Still she refuses to yield to him, and is freed from her guards by the powerful and faithful Ursus.

Marcus leaves no stone unturned to find her and is led at last to the secret meeting place of the Christians. Not only are Lygia and Ursus there, but also Aulus Plautius and his wife who have become believers. And in that group who have embraced the Gospel of peace and good will toward men Marcus hears a Christian called Paul of Tarsus introduce a simple old man whom he describes as "a man who saw the face of Jesus and touched his hand. He comes from Jerusalem—the fisherman, Simon called Peter!" And Peter tells them of Calvary.

But Marcus, though deeply impressed, is still the hot-blooded Roman aristocrat, and he makes another attempt to carry Lygia away to be his slave and paramour. Again Ursus proves invincible, destroying the

*(Left) Mortal combat—the giant Ursus vs. savage bull.*

*Christian martyrs at the mercy of hungry lions in the Circus of Nero.*

*Message for the Christians—in an abandoned quarry hundreds defy Nero's soldiery to listen to the teachings of Peter.*

*Nero strangles his beautiful Empress Poppaea whom he blames for his plight as the mob storms the palace.*

huge gladiator Croton whom Marcus has hired to deal with the Christian giant. Also Ursus wounds Marcus, and Lygia nurses him back to health.

She has almost conquered his proud spirit. Furthermore, she has learned to love him, and when he asks her to become his wife she consents. But then he discovers that she has no intention of giving up her Christian faith, and in his anger he leaves her for Nero's court and the favors of the beautiful and lascivious Empress Poppaea.

The half-crazed ruler Nero has formed the plan of burning Rome to the ground as an inspiration for new songs and also in order that he may build a new city to be known as Neropolis. The sycophants who surround him aid and encourage him in his scheme.

So it is that great Rome, queen of the ancient world, goes up in flames while Nero, watching the conflagration, strums his lyre and sings of the fall of Troy and of his own capital city. But young Marcus, aware at last of the power of his love, thinks only of Lygia and sets out to find her in the burning city. Rescuing her, he is seized with her and other Christians, for Nero, terrified of the rage of the citizens, has determined to cast the blame for the great fire on the humble, harmless adherents of the new religion.

The capital of the world empire is in chaos. Petronius, the Arbiter of Elegance, fine flower of the old Roman culture, commits suicide with Eunice, the faithful slave girl who loves him more than life itself. The captive Christians are to be thrown to the lions in the great Circus of Nero for the entertainment of the populace—and to distract their attention from the corruption of the government.

One of the Christians who has escaped the authorities is Peter, who leaves Rome with a young follower, Nazarius. The apostle looks for a sign from God, for his conscience troubles him sorely as he flees the stricken city. Falling on his knees, he asks the crucial question: "Quo vadis, Domine?" ("Whither goest thou, Lord?"). And through the mouth of young Nazarius, who stands as in a trance, the Presence answers: "If thou desertest my people I will go to Rome to be crucified a second time."

Peter returns to Rome—to the amphitheatre where Christians are being burnt on crosses—and to prison where Marcus and Lygia await their fate. There he unites them in Christian marriage.

Then comes the climax of the famous story. Lygia, garlanded with flowers, is led into the arena and tied to a stake. Only the faithful Ursus stands between her and an infuriated bull which is released before the roaring crowd. Nero promises that if the giant Ursus can defeat the bull, Lygia shall go free. A mighty struggle ends in Ursus's victory, and Marcus, who has been forced to watch the scene, leaps into the arena to free Lygia and rouse the crowd against Nero.

The rage of the populace, the death of Nero and the wicked Poppaea, the union of Marcus and Lygia mark the final scenes of "Quo Vadis." A great light is breaking on the world. A new era is being born.

*Marcus and Ursus free Lygia and lead the revolt against the tyranny of Nero.*

*It comes to life—Leonardo da Vinci's celebrated painting, "The Last Supper," is a scene to behold!*

*Roman revel—merciless wrestlers struggle to the death to entertain Nero's court.*

*Pagan ceremony before the portals of Nero's palace.*

*Marcus and Lygia re-united in the Circus of Nero.*

# THE SPECTACLE OF ANCIENT ROME

The more spectacular scenes of the film including the triumphal procession in front of Nero's palace, the burning of Rome, the banquet scene and the sequences which take place in the huge circus of Nero had to be mapped out on paper in advance with the same attention to minute detail that a modern army might employ prior to a full-scale land and sea invasion.

In the first place an entirely separate organization had to be created to handle the mechanics of these big scenes. Extra help had to be procured in the casting, wardrobe, make-up and accounting departments. It was necessary to construct on the outdoor lot a cafeteria capable of feeding 2,000 persons in 20-minute sittings. Six large first aid stations, fully staffed with doctors and nurses, had to be established at strategic points in anticipation of the emergency medical cases that would surely arise.

On most of these big scenes four Technicolor cameras were used simultaneously to cover the sequence from every angle. For the triumphal procession alone four camera towers (one, 150 feet high) were erected.

Sixteen assistant directors, most of them Italian, were hired to work with the big crowds. They were used to transmit orders from Director LeRoy to the thousands of extras, much in the manner of army sergeants relaying commands of superiors.

Days before each big scene was scheduled to go before the cameras, members of the casting department began notifying extras, all of whom had been catalogued previously. The problems of this task become obvious when it is considered that 85 percent of those who applied had no telephone and many had no specific address, merely indicating they could be reached through such and such a friend.

On nights preceding the start of these scenes many hundreds of the hopeful who were anxious to work came to the studio and spent the night sleeping on the meadows which surround Cinecitta.

As the mob extras (called comparse) were engaged, they were placed in charge of an experienced extra (or genereci) who thereafter would be responsible for getting those in his group to work on time. It would be his duty also to see that his unit (usually 30 in number) moved in and out of wardrobe and make-up promptly, and that the group remained close together on the set. At the end of the day he would be paid and left to distribute the money to the individuals under his command.

To handle mobs of people without confusion the first unit moved into wardrobe at five in the morning; often the last group would not be cleared until ten at night. So that the various units would know where to assemble on the sets, different colored flags were set up. Then the various groups would gather at the flag which had been designated as their symbol.

Typical of the complex call sheets which went to the casting department prior to the big scenes was the following, issued in connection with the triumphal procession sequence. The department was asked to procure: 10 Roman generals; five Egyptian dignitaries; five Syrian dignitaries; five African dignitaries; 40 Praetorian guards; 30 standard bearers; seven cavalry officers; 295 cavalry; 79 members of the band; six infantry officers; 12 infantry non-coms; 708 infantry soldiers; 10 dancing priests; 10 trumpeters; 36 women choir singers; 10 vestal virgins; 24 flower girls; 115 high class men; 510 middle class men; 1,750 lower class men; and a corresponding number of women, their various classes to be indicated by dress.

It was also necessary for five rams, three cows and three calves to be garlanded in flowers since they were supposed to be sacrificed to Nero on an altar of fire. In addition there were 350 horses, many of them pulling chariots.

The other spectacle scenes required personnel just as varied and as colorful.

# THE MUSIC

The musical score which Dr. Miklos Rozsa, brilliant two-time Academy Award winner, has created for "Quo Vadis" is expected to set a whole new pattern for the scoring of historical films.

In the first place, although there is no record of exactly what kind of music the ancient Romans enjoyed, the tunes used in the production are believed to be as nearly authentic as possible. The song that Nero sings during the burning of Rome, and the hymn the Christians chant as they are martyred, are most likely a close approximation of the real thing. At least Dr. Rozsa doesn't think they differ more than a few notes from the compositions sung by the Emperor and his people.

Rozsa preceded his work on the film with many months of careful research. To evolve the songs of 2,000 years ago he and Hugh Gray, who wrote the lyrics, went back to the Greeks who left written records of some of their songs. Both Rozsa and Gray are agreed that these undoubtedly influenced Roman music. They point out that mostly the music was liturgical, with numerous hymns written in praise of Mars, Jupiter and other pagan gods.

According to Rozsa the Romans obtained musical rhythm by the use of words. Therefore, he simply had to study Greek poetry in order to get an idea of the beat of the music. In writing the score he followed three main lines: use of Greek influence for music involving Nero, Marcus and the other personalities; use of old Hebrew melodies (which actually became the basis for the early Roman Catholic Church ritual) in the religious scenes; and finally, use of martial music based on Greek and Sicilian melodies. in the scenes involving the military.

Failure of the Romans to leave a record of their music did not, it seems, prevent modern man from discovering exactly the type of musical instruments they used. The pottery, statues and paintings passed down from this ancient period contain reproductions of men and women using the aulos (a double flute); the salpinx (a long trumpet); the buccina (forerunner of the modern horn); the lituus (a long brass pipe) and other rare instruments. These even include the bagpipe which historians agree actually was introduced into Scotland by ancient Roman soldiers.

For use in "Quo Vadis" copies of all of these instruments including the bagpipe were made in Italy.

Rozsa declares that the only thing in the music line on which he has done any real improvising is in the matter of harmonization. He points out that music of 2,000 years ago was entirely homonophous (lacking in harmony) and everything had to be played or sung in unison. Actually harmony was not evolved until 700 years later.

The Christians in "Quo Vadis", according to the composer, do sing their hymns in harmony, although he offers assurance that they have not gone so far as to use four-point harmony while being devoured by the lions.

Dr. Rozsa, who holds a professorship in film music at U. C. L. A. and who is recognized as one of the brightest musical talents on the Hollywood scene, has been composing for films since 1936. A native of Hungary, he has made his home in Hollywood since 1941. His scores for "Spellbound" and "A Double Life" won Academy Awards, and in addition he composed the music for such notable films as "Lost Weekend", "The Killers" and "Naked City".

*The music from "QUO VADIS" is available in the M-G-M RECORDS album in all three speeds.*

*The court of Nero at the height of its decadent revelry.*

*One of history's great moments—the burning of Rome. Marcus and Lygia among the frenzied thousands of doomed souls.*

*Escape in the night—panic stricken citizens of Rome flee the burning city by climbing from the sewers to a bridge across the Tiber.*

*Reunion in the flames—Marcus and Lygia join her giant bodyguard, Ursus, and the boy Nazarius.*

*Lygia and Marcus lead the terrified throngs in flight from the burning city.*

# ROME BURNS AGAIN

The scenes depicting the burning of Rome provide "Quo Vadis" with what possibly is the production's most spectacular sequence. Certainly the filming of these scenes gave the company one of its most difficult assignments.

Four large blocks of the Eternal City as it is believed to have looked 2,000 years ago were reconstructed on the Cinecitta outdoor lot. Shops, houses and streets were decorated with careful attention to historical accuracy. Then the company's Special Effects Unit went to work.

For three months a crew of twenty men labored continuously to mix thousands of gallons of inflammable liquid and then lay two miles of pipe to conduct it. Ten huge tanks (which had to be officially approved by the Italian government) were built. Into them were poured 4,000 gallons of fuel oil, 2,000 gallons of gasoline, 3,000 gallons of a special alcohol mixture and more than a ton of napthalene. In addition fifty 20-gallon tanks of butane gas were connected to the set.

Next it was necessary to lay two miles of small iron pipe to carry these inflammables to 127 doors and windows in the four-block area. Each pipe passed through an elaborate control board which held a system of 275 valves, every one numbered corresponding to a door or a window. The pipes were wound around the inside of each window and door frame, with a pilot light located at each opening to serve as an igniter.

Large metal shields were hinged inside each door and window so that they could be dropped at will and thus force the flames outside. More than a ton of asbestos weather-stripped each of the openings.

Nero burned Rome in six days but it took M-G-M 24 nights to complete the job. During these nights of filming the special effects unit of 94 men on the assignment stood beside the cameras. At a signal from the director, instructions were microphoned to the control panel which was located on a vantage point high above the buildings. As flames would be called for to pour from Window Number Two or Door Number Ten, the proper valve was pressed to start the flow of inflammable liquid from the storage tanks.

A total of 50,000 feet of fire hose also was passed through the control board. Each hose led from a water tank to a point on some building. As a precautionary measure, prior to each scene, and immediately afterwards, the proper valve was opened to start the water through the hose and wet down that portion of the set to be burned in the particular sequence. Windows and doors had to be repainted each day so that they would be ready for the next night's work.

A company from the Rome Fire Department stood by throughout filming of the dangerous scenes. They were there just in case. Fortunately, however, their services were not needed, the 2,000 actors involved moving in and out of the flaming buildings without mishap—something they certainly were not able to do in Nero's day.

*Extra copies of this souvenir book can be obtained from AL GREENSTONE, 145 West 45th St., New York 19, N.Y.*

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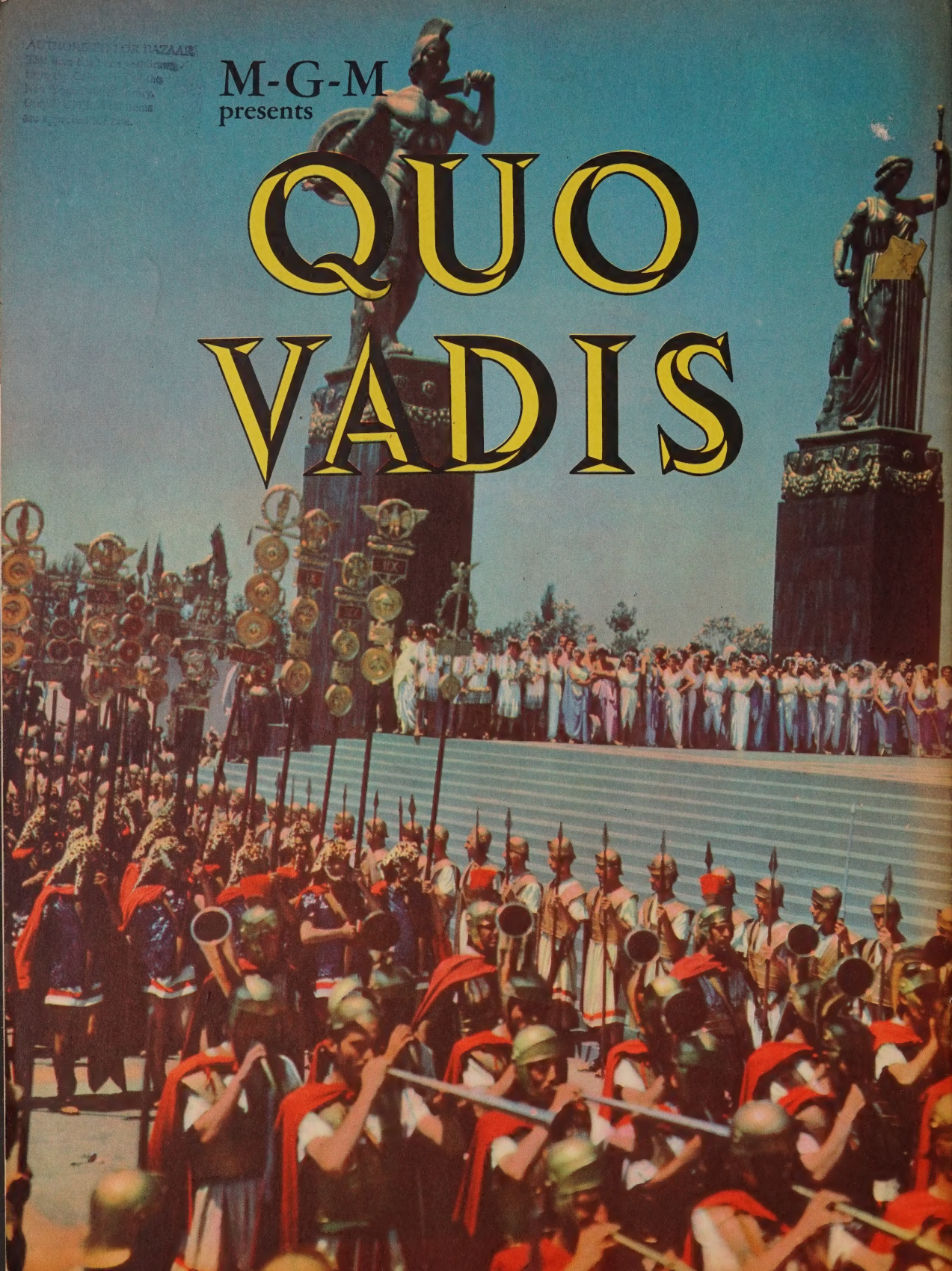
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